

What is claimed is:

1. An image pick-up unit comprising:

an image pick-up device; and

a plurality of optical filters which are cemented  
5 together in layers and positioned in front of said image  
pick-up device,

wherein at least two optical filters among said  
plurality of optical filters, which have different  
optical properties, are different in shape from each  
10 other.

2. The image pick-up unit according to claim  
1, wherein each optical filter of said plurality of  
optical filters is asymmetrical with respect to a center  
of said each optical filter.

15 3. The image pick-up unit according to claim  
1, wherein said plurality of optical filters are formed  
so that general outer shapes thereof are geometrically  
similar to each other,

wherein each optical filter of said plurality of  
20 optical filters has at least four corners, each of which  
is cut out by a predetermined amount, and

wherein each of said plurality of optical filters  
is formed so that at least one of said four corners is  
cut out by an amount different from an amount cutout of  
25 each of remaining corners of said four corners.

4. The image pick-up unit according to claim 3, wherein said plurality of optical filters are formed so that general outer dimensions thereof are the same.

5. The image pick-up unit according to claim 5 1, wherein said plurality of optical filters are formed so that general outer shapes thereof are geometrically similar to each other,

wherein each optical filter of said plurality of optical filters has at least four corners each of which 10 is cut out by a predetermined amount, and

wherein each of said plurality of optical filters except for at least one thereof is formed so that at least one of said four corners is cut out by an amount different from an amount cutout of each of remaining corners of 15 said four corners.

6. The image pick-up unit according to claim 5, wherein said plurality of optical filters are formed so that general outer dimensions thereof are the same.

7. The image pick-up unit according to claim 20 1, wherein said plurality of optical filters are formed so that general outer shapes thereof are geometrically similar to each other, and

wherein each of said plurality of optical filters comprises one of a projection and a recess on an outer 25 edge of said each optical filter which does not overlap

another optical filter of said plurality of optical filters when said plurality of optical filters are cemented together in layers.

8. The image pick-up unit according to claim 5 7, wherein said plurality of optical filters are formed so that general outer dimensions thereof are the same.

9. The image pick-up unit according to claim 1, wherein said plurality of optical filters are formed so that general outer shapes thereof are geometrically 10 similar to each other, and

wherein each of said plurality of optical filters except for at least one thereof includes one of a projection and a recess on an outer edge of said each optical filter which does not overlap another optical 15 filter of said plurality of optical filters when said plurality of optical filters are cemented together in layers.

10. The image pick-up unit according to claim 9, wherein said plurality of optical filters are formed 20 so that general outer dimensions thereof are the same.

11. The image pick-up unit according to claim 1, wherein an optical filter of said plurality of optical filters which is positioned closest to said image pick-up device comprises an infrared cut-off glass serving as 25 a cover glass for covering the front of said image pick-up

device to seal said image pick-up device, and

wherein each optical filter of said plurality of optical filter except for said infrared cut-off glass comprises an optical low-pass filter.

5           12.    The image pick-up unit according to claim 11, wherein a rear surface of one of said plurality of optical filters which is cemented to a front surface of said infrared cut-off glass is coated with an optical matched filter coating, and

10           wherein at least one surface of remaining surfaces of said plurality of optical filters is coated with an anti-reflection coating.

          13.    The image pick-up unit according to claim 11, wherein the length and width of each optical filter  
15 of said plurality of optical filters, except for said infrared cut-off glass, are one of equal to and less than the length and width of said infrared cut-off glass, respectively.

          14.    The image pick-up unit according to claim  
20 11, wherein a thickness of each optical filter of said plurality of optical filters, except for said infrared cut-off glass, is one of equal to and less than approximately 0.3mm, and

          wherein outer dimensions of said plurality of  
25 optical filters, except for said infrared cut-off glass,

decrease stepwise in a direction from said infrared cut-off glass toward a side from which incoming light is incident on said image pick-up device.

15. The image pick-up unit according to claim 11,  
5 wherein each optical filter of said plurality of optical filters is made of one of the following birefringent glass materials: quartz, lithium niobate and lithium tri-borate.

16. The image pick-up unit according to claim  
10 1, wherein said plurality of optical filters, which are cemented together in layers, are cemented to said image pick-up device.

17. The image pick-up unit according to claim  
1, wherein each optical filter of said plurality of  
15 optical filters is substantially rectangular in shape, each of four corners of said each optical filter being chamfered.

18. An image pick-up unit comprising:  
an image pick-up device; and  
20 a plurality of optical filters which are made of cemented layers of optical material, and positioned immediately in front of said image pick-up device,

wherein the length and width of at least one optical filter of said plurality of optical filters are  
25 different from the length and width of another optical

filter of said plurality of optical filters.